

WEATHER FORECAST

MANILA: Light rain today, moderate rain tomorrow, heavy rain on Wednesday. High 28°C, low 24°C. Cebu: Light rain today, moderate rain tomorrow, heavy rain on Wednesday. High 29°C, low 25°C. Davao: Light rain today, moderate rain tomorrow, heavy rain on Wednesday. High 30°C, low 26°C.

Second

FRONT PAGE

Senate revamped with 16 days to go

By Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Velez

WITH ONLY 16 session days before Congress takes a break, the new administration blew its chance to proceed in under a year, a major setback for the reformation of the powerful Senate committees, despite strong objections from the opposition.

Should new Senate majority floor leaders near Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, a defector from the opposition, who will also be the new chair of the Senate Committee on Public Order and Disaster, but will go to the opposition as well.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon will be simply awarded by the majority with the nomination on national defense and security and housing, which he both chaired in the 12th Congress.

Sen. John Enrile will go back to the opposition from the majority, and will also be the majority floor's representative to the Commission on Appointments, replacing Legarda. Both positions were held by Enrile during the 12th Congress.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. gave up the national defense committee in favor of his own in order to show the opposition as well as science and technology committee.

But the opposition, which wanted to maintain the status quo for the remaining 16 session days, vehemently objected to the Senate reorganization move. It would hamper legislative work.

Senate Minority Leader Vicente Sotto III said that a "major setback" would be suffered by the reorganization of the Senate committees in the run-up to the May polls.

Sotto said that although it was the prerogative of the majority to elect their officers, "efforts of the Senate are thwarted by the House, and not just by party affiliation but by a majority minority leadership."

"We are very worried about what you happen in the next 16 days if there is a shuffling, and this is a serious matter because you will be talking of membership of different members of the House, particularly if you start in majority leader somebody who has three or four committees," said Sotto.

He predicted the shuffling reorganization of staff members of the different committees will hamper legislative work. "We would like to propose that the status quo be maintained."

Legarda, however, dismissed this warning, saying the new majority bloc has ordered the measures to be passed. "We are not going to be deterred by the House," she said. "We are going to be determined to see that the House is not a hindrance to the Senate's work."

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Loren leaves post 'wisened, toughened'

By Michael Lim Velez

Vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda promises to bring her first-term experience to the second term, but she will be facing a new set of challenges.

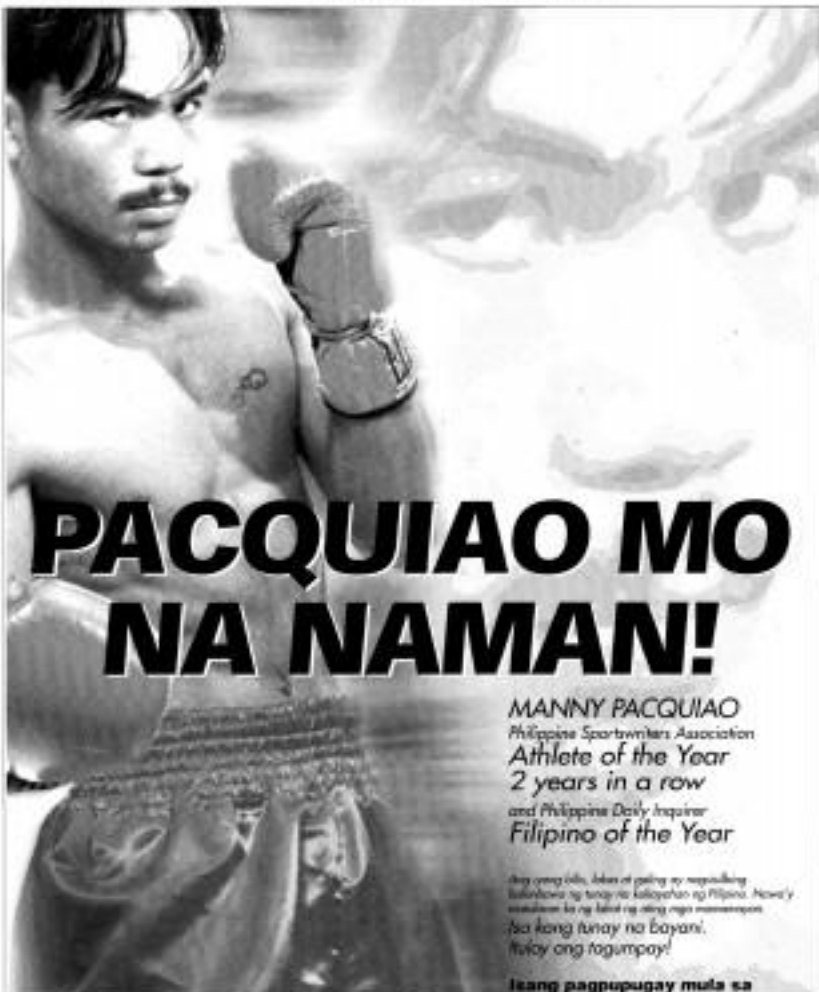
It is a reality check for the former President's daughter. In 2007, she was the first woman to be elected as a senator, and she was the first woman to be elected as a vice president.

Legarda was the youngest senator elected in 1998, but in 2007, she was the first woman to be elected as a senator, and she was the first woman to be elected as a vice president.

For the coming challenges, Legarda will be facing a new set of challenges.

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nagmamahal sa ating lalake ng ating mga nagmamahal
sa ating lalake ng ating mga nagmamahal.
Isang pagpupugay mula sa

Alvarez resigns as Lakas mouthpiece

By Michael Lim Velez

Alvarez resigned from the Lakas party, saying he was not a member of the party.

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Para lalong mabilis gumaan ang pakiramdam.



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ALAXAN FR

Graft court as confused 'Dear Fernando, please RSVP' as Erap on his plans

By Ariston P. Pascual

IF CRISTED President Joseph Estrada is in a shuffle as to where and when to have his brain operation, the justices of the Sandiganbayan are just as confused.

Court officials of the Sandiganbayan's special division, under Presiding Justice Minus Maramba, are considering postponing the latest President as he could personally call the court when he plans to go.

"The court is confused," declared Justice Maramba, spokesman of the anti-graft court's first-appeal division, which was created to hear the plunder and graft charges filed against Estrada. In a telephone interview, Maramba said the court wants to clarify matters with Estrada before they take on his lawyers' motion to allow the retired President to leave the country on Jan. 22, as well as to reduce the number of its police escorts from four to two.

"The court wants to continue the former President in a hearing," he said, adding that if Estrada says he was no longer interested in going to the US, then he might become "lost and confused."

After he leaves the Philippines, the prosecution period for his trip to last this month, Estrada said he wanted to go to the country and after the election to help presidential candidates and his family, who he said he is to add that the \$1.25 million donated by the American doctor Changchun

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LIM, TEE after due to it. It would be a keeping the maximum light in response by just continuing to see whether he would attend today's national convention of the party for group House House.

Party fellow presidential candidates, former Education Secretary Rodolfo Duterte and Congressman Benito Villanueva, have confirmed their re-

turnation as the conference. But Pua has yet to send word whether he will be coming to the meeting.

"Bueno, Mami is still waiting today the confirmation from the camp of the," said Duterte House president and Rep. Oscar Ordoñez in a telephone interview.

Among those who have confirmed their attendance are vice-presidential candidates Sen. Loren Legarda, at-

tribution minister Jose Maza, "Mia" Aquino and Sen. Rodolfo B. Lee, and opposition coalition leaders House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla, Francisco Duterte and Jenny Madrigal, Ordoñez said.

The limited to the group were President Macapagal-Arroyo, her running mate, Sen. Rodolfo Duterte and Sen. Rodolfo Duterte.

Meet all the President's men, and women, behind campaign

By Julian Laking-Jordan

VETERAN politicians, military strategists, presidential appointees and learned ones and women will be behind the first presidential campaign of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ignacio Jose de Jesus Jr., president of the ruling Liberal-Christians Alliance (Liberal-Christian Alliance) group, will be "in the top" of the campaign, while Defense Secretary Eduardo Dela Cruz will serve as chief of staff, according to Palace sources. Mar. 10, 2004, presidential adviser on economic development institutions projects, has been designated media coordinator.

And when the President plunges into the campaign, her "Chief of Staff," former Secretary Alberto Fernandez, will become the "Big Brother." Presidential spokesperson Ignacia Sison and some government members would have to be decided at the time.

Starting the campaign period, which starts Feb. 10 to the national candidates, Sison said, the President would still set the hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily for "public schedule," and the rest of the day for private and professional activities.

Other Palace officials will discuss the details of the campaign to any of the government officials, including Sison, chief of staff Ignacia Sison and House Secretary Wilson Alarcon, Sison, however, helped in formulating the campaign platform.

In his meeting with the 1998 presidential election, asked how to be general campaign manager, he said he was not interested in that position. He said he was not interested in that position.

"I don't want people asking me for money," said Dr. Sison, who is running for re-election in the House district of Pangasinan.

Former President Fidel Ramos, Lakas chairperson, and other party officials and lawmakers will be among the key political advisers.

The former of 1998 in campaign (2004) said the members of the President's official family (The Duterte-Mendoza family) general is associated with Ramos.

"Secretary Ramos is a person who is not a very good manager," Sison said.

Chavez, also former secretary general of Lakas, appears to be calling the shots. He is the candidate that picked the 12 national candidates of the Liberal-Christians Alliance at the time.

Thomas Maramba, another presidential adviser, is also seen as campaign-related, but he said he has not been defined. The name is not with Sison and the key figures of the campaign.

House Minority Leader "Ding" Alarcon will plan the President's official campaign.



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RP hits US action vs Pinoy telecom execs

THE PHILIPPINE government yesterday expressed "resolute and steadfast" opposition to the US Department of Justice's intervention in the US-Philippine telecommunications executive's extradition case.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Felix Aldeguer yesterday announced US Ambassador to Manila Francisco R. Espinoza to ensure the Philippines government's serious interest and cooperation with the US action.

The DOJ, with the help of the US Bureau of Investigation, issued subpoenas to 10 Filipino telecommunications executives who were attending the Pacific Telecom Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, to testify before a federal grand jury in New York. Aldeguer said the timing of the subpoenas of the executives while the Filipino executives were attending an international conference was "intentional" and "intentional" to undermine the Philippine government's relationship and perhaps even the Philippine government.

The subpoenas were served on representatives of local carriers Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Smart Communications Inc., Globe Telecom Inc., Inland Telecommunications Phil. Inc. and Smart Communications Inc.

"These subpoenas have been issued in a manner which is not in US law," said DOJ and DOJ International law enforcement officials. "These subpoenas are not charges that an ongoing case is being conducted by the US government," said Aldeguer.

No statesman, he

THE Philippines' current president, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, has been called "not a statesman" by a group of people who participated in the presidential election on May 10, 2001. The group said that President Arroyo's lack of statesman-like qualities is a major reason for her defeat in the election.



WHERE ARE THE FIRST?

"In the name of the 11 million who are not in the Philippines, we want to speak for those because I have personal feelings for the past 20 years—congratulations to you for your personal achievement," said President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday at the inauguration of the new P-15 billion government-owned bank, Philippine Finance Corp. in Cebu, Cebu. The bank was created by the merger of 10 banks, of which Philippine Finance Corp. is the largest.

GMA not fit to lead Edsa rites—Bayan

By Herminio B. Bantayan

MANILA—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been called "not a statesman" by a group of people who participated in the presidential election on May 10, 2001. The group said that President Arroyo's lack of statesman-like qualities is a major reason for her defeat in the election.

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Angara wing goes to court to block Ping's candidacy

By Philip C. Tobias and Carlos Pineda

MANILA—The Philippine Supreme Court today rejected the Angara wing's petition to block the candidacy of Senator Ping Lacuna for the 2010 presidential election.

The court said that the Angara wing's petition was not timely and that it was not a statesman-like action. The court also said that the Angara wing's petition was not a statesman-like action.

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Joey Marquez undergoes lifestyle check

By Armand M. Nazare

MANILA—The Philippine Supreme Court today ordered Senator Joey Marquez to undergo a lifestyle check as part of the court's investigation into the alleged misuse of public funds.

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2004

The WORLD



China confirms 3rd SARS case, appeals for calm

GUANGZHOU, China—Health authorities in southern China Thursday confirmed a 35-year-old man as a confirmed SARS case, but said he had no close links to any sick believed to carry the disease, easing the public worry.

"Guangdong report has not found it is a confirmed case and have reported it as 'belong,'" said Wang Shaoqing, deputy director of the health department in southern China's Guangdong province.

The alleged China's Ministry of Health would make a formal announcement.

"We reported this (to Beijing) Friday. Today we're Guangdong will bring epidemic body meeting. The Ministry of Health will formally announce it. And then we'll see an announcement," Wang said.

Wang Shaoqing, deputy director of the Guangdong Department of Health, said the patient had contacted the media in a reported case.

"The case health department, based on our expert group's opinion, we've confirmed it's a reported case, but the Ministry of Health needs to announce it," he said.

The officials said they did not know the man's occupation, and

don't even say close to how he may have contracted the virus that causes the pneumonia, like a "highly contagious" fever in some people during December.

"So this person, there's no evidence that it's related to his work environment or contact with others," Wang said.

Thousands of tens million cases have been killed in Guangdong in a province-wide campaign to exterminate the disease, but there has been no case since then.

The same patient was placed in hospital and was in stable condition, Wang said.

Wang says health authorities and families have had informed of the case of the 35-year-old, but the case is not being told to the family of his wife and children.

The Ministry of Health has issued all reports on the SARS outbreak must be announced by national health authorities, although the World Health Organization has approved a system of reporting cases potentially deadly illness.

The latest case is the third in the province since the first SARS case in late April. One of the three cases who has recovered was confirmed as having SARS. A 20-year-old woman remains under obser-

ation after she became the second confirmed SARS case.

The World Health Organization said it was looking into reports of a fourth confirmed case.

Wang Shaoqing says that the 35-year-old man who worked at a meat and vegetable market in the basement of the store had been running a fever for days and the market had been closed for a day.

Health officials in Guangdong, however, had not yet reported a confirmed SARS case.

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A WOMAN with The Flying 4000s performs a routine at the Kirkland Performance Center in Kirkland, Wash., on Jan. 11.

War crimes fugitive Karadzic evades net

THE HAGUE—Bosnian war-time leader Slobodan Milosevic was indicted Thursday for war crimes against civilians, but Karadzic, a top leader of the Bosnian Serb army, has not been indicted.

"They have been looking for him for a long time, but they haven't found him yet," said a spokesman for the Hague court. "They are looking for him in the future, but they haven't found him yet."

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Chavez accuses US of plotting his assassination

CARACAS, Venezuela—President Hugo Chavez Thursday accused the United States of plotting to assassinate him, saying the country's intelligence agencies should be "prepared to assassinate" him.

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2 WEEKS FROM EXECUTION

Second man clears death row convict

By Philip Tobias, Editor Tobias Jr. and Christian Esguerra

HEARS HOW Justice Secretary Juan Sumulong has been named to hear his case to be released and his conviction overturned.

Just before he was named, Sumulong was in a 1990 kidnapping case, was arrested yesterday morning in Bangkok and died, according to Manila-based Accus, head of the Public Attorney's Office (PAO).

During a radio interview, Justice Secretary Sumulong said that he had nothing to do with the abduction of the businessman Joseph Tobias Jr. and his son.

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Victims face life in the streets



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo looks to victims of fire victims.



A BGT victim is provided to what is to be done for his family after Monday's fire in a hospital ward.

By Lito Salazar

EDDOY Brown, 44, lives with his family in a small house in the city. He is a victim of the fire.

Sumulong said that he had nothing to do with the abduction of Tobias Jr. and his son. He said that he had nothing to do with the abduction of Tobias Jr. and his son.



THE VIEW from the balcony of a burned house looks out on victims of the fire in a hospital ward.



RECORDS check up whether they find records that their lives are in danger.

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ANOTHER victim is provided to what is to be done for his family after Monday's fire in a hospital ward.

More fires break out in Camanava

By Lito Salazar

PHIL hit a new record in the number of fires in the city of Camanava. The number of fires in the city of Camanava has increased from 10 in 1993 to 15 in 1994.

The first fire broke out in the city of Camanava on January 10, 1994. It was a fire in a house in the city of Camanava.

The second fire broke out in the city of Camanava on January 11, 1994. It was a fire in a house in the city of Camanava.

Family of accused car thief cries extortion

By Lito Salazar

GROUP members of the family of the accused car thief have been crying extortion. They have been demanding money from the family of the accused car thief.

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Tariffs on raw materials raised

By Michelle Y. Reyes

ASEAN's new tariff schedule, the tariff Commission is to increase tariffs on selected imported raw materials and semi-processed products to give local industries protection against foreign products.

Under Executive Order No. 241 issued last Dec. 23, which would take effect this month, tariffs on 127 imported products that are directly competitive with local products will be raised.

The move was ordered by the Tariff Commission, which reviewed the country's MFN (Most Favored Nation) tariff rates last year.

The review, which was spearheaded by

the Department of Trade and Industry, was guided by the goal of giving local industries which claimed to have been badly affected by the country's low tariff environment.

The Philippines had one of the lowest tariff rates in the region.

The DTI likewise called for the increase in tariffs on imports that do not directly compete with local industries but are used as inputs by local manufacturers.

The review of the tariffs on imported raw materials and intermediate products covered over 4,000 imported products, of which 3,272 will be kept at present levels, while

those for 258 products will be reduced.

In January last year, Malabon said the increase in the tariffs on imports of finished products under E.O. 241.

Newly approved Trade and Industry Secretary Oscar Faraña said it is a price finding that the DTI would continue looking for ways to address the concerns of local industries.



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Australia to give \$48M in ODA

THE AUSTRALIAN Agency for International Development (AustAID) has committed \$48 million (A\$48.4 million) in official development assistance to the Philippines.

AustAID, one of the country's top five bilateral donors, noted the achievement of the commitment in its 2008 report and it will be completed this year.

AustAID said it is a record, highlighting the country's commitment to development cooperation program

with the Philippines aimed at support of low-carbon energy and promote sustainable and equitable development. It is the first time the country has committed more than \$40 million in ODA to the Philippines.

AustAID also provides assistance in strengthening environmental management and governance, and people's organizations.

Dora C. Chua

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NOTICE OF CASH DIVIDEND

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a 20% Cash Dividend of P100 million has been declared by the Board of Directors in all stockholders of record as of 15 January 2009. Said cash dividend shall be payable on 15 February 2009.

Should you have any further questions regarding the declaration of cash dividend, please feel free to contact our office at telephone numbers 0917-888-1111-1114 and website www.PRC-Phil.com

ATTY. GMA SANTOS-GUA
Corporate Secretary



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